

The University of Chicago

THE
CONQUEST, PACIFICATION, AND
ADMINISTRATION OF THE
SHAN STATES BY THE
BRITISH, 1886-1897

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1936

By

CLARENCE HENDERSHOT

Private Edition, Distributed by
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARIES
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

1938

The University of Chicago

THE
CONQUEST, PACIFICATION, AND
ADMINISTRATION OF THE
SHAN STATES BY THE
BRITISH, 1886-1897

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
1936

By
CLARENCE HENDERSHOT

Private Edition, Distributed by
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO LIBRARIES
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
1938



THE CONQUEST, PACIFICATION, AND ADMINISTRATION
OF THE SHAN STATES BY THE BRITISH, 1886--1897

In the mountainous recesses of southeastern Asia, hedged in by Burma, Yunnan, Siam, and Indo-China, is a cluster of principalities known as the Federated Shan States. Their combined area is slightly greater than that of Illinois; their population about one and a half million. Today they are but a fringe of empire, better known in the world's silver markets than among students of political affairs; yet their acquisition half a century ago by the British created new problems in Anglo-Chinese relations, provoked a crisis between France and England, and launched a new experiment in British colonial administration.

The early history of the Shan States is lost in obscurity. Shan chronicles record dates before the Christian era, but these writings are admittedly of recent compilation. The more reliable Burmese and Chinese records indicate, nevertheless, that certain of the states have existed at least seven centuries. In the thirteenth century, for example, Hsenwi was a vassal of the Yuan dynasty. In the fourteenth century Hsipaw was an important principality. Yawnghwe is mentioned in Burmese annals of the fifteenth century; Mong Nai, Lawksawk, Mong Pai, Samka, and Kengtung all appear in the Burmese chronicles of the next century.

The status of these principalities before the sixteenth century is undetermined, but about 1550 they were engulfed in a great outwelling of Burmese power under the warrior-king Bayinnaung. Although the authority of his successors was not always effective, the Shan States were never again free from Burmese interference; with the rise of the Alaungpaya dynasty in the eighteenth century, their subjection became a reality.

There were about forty states varying greatly in size, population and wealth. Kengtung and Hsenwi measured more than ten thousand square miles each; others contained less than twenty. Regardless of area, each was a separate principality with an hereditary chief. In the more important states the ruler bore the title sawbwa; in those of less importance, myosa; in the

least, ngwegunhmu.

The Burmese administered, not the people, but the chiefs at whose capitals they kept officers stationed. In the case of the smaller states, an officer would have more than one state under his supervision. Although garrisons were kept at strategic points, the Burmese did not rely primarily on military force to maintain their position. Precaution was taken against concerted action by dealing with the chiefs individually and forbidding them to consult with each other on political matters. All affairs between the states and with foreign powers were administered by the king of Burma. Possibly a more effective practice was the maintaining of an intimate bond between the families of the chiefs and that of their suzerain. One means whereby this was accomplished was through the training of Shan princes and princesses at the royal court. The Shans appear to have appreciated this as a privilege and paid the court the compliment of imitation. The king's palace became the model for their haws; the ceremonies of the royal court constituted the mirror of fashion in the feudatories; Burmese administration became the prototype of Shan government. Many princesses were permanently attached to the royal court. To have a daughter introduced into the royal harem was deemed a great honor; to have one chosen as queen consort, as occasionally happened, was a political triumph. Such intimate ties, nevertheless, did not alter the fact that the Shans at the court of Burma were virtual hostages. Many found imprisonment, or death, the penalty for a father's insubordination. The punishment inflicted when rebellion occurred was calculated to discourage recurrence. Not only did the "hostages" suffer loss of freedom, if not of life, but the rebel's throne was taken from him and his territory was devastated.

Tribute was paid by the chiefs once or twice each year. This consisted of ponies, gold and silver "flowers" and bowls, velvet, silks, candles, and other miscellaneous articles, presented as "gifts" to the king, to the members of the royal family, and to a large number of officials. Upon request the chiefs had to present themselves at court. In case of rebellion or foreign war, they were obliged to supply troops according to demand. These were not the only benefits which accrued to the Burmese king. He received a very considerable income from the monopoly of certain articles of trade, from tolls, and from the

exploitation of forests and mines.

In the internal administration of their states, the chiefs were permitted great freedom. They issued decrees, levied taxes, and administered justice. They were, in fact, petty despots after the model of their suzerain. In dealing with their subjects, they exercised the same prerogatives, including power of life and death. Death was a common punishment, the chief not infrequently constituting himself the executioner. The Burmese showed little concern in the internal administration of a state as long as order was maintained.

Despite the arbitrary powers of chiefs, the people were not as much at their mercy as the prerogatives might suggest because of the ease with which the villagers could migrate. Land was free; a house could be constructed in a few hours from the materials of the jungle; and there was always a welcome in the next state--even an inducement in the form of tax-exemption for a period of years. Consequently, it behooved a chief to keep his subjects as contented as possible.

The existence of forty chieftainships in an area slightly larger than Illinois or Wisconsin suggests rugged country and such is the case. On the west the Shan States are separated from the plains of Burma by a series of mountain ranges rising to altitudes of five to six thousand feet. Then for two hundred fifty miles north and south, and extending a hundred miles to the east, lies an irregular upland. This, with a mean altitude of about three thousand feet, is intersected by mountain ranges which, rising much higher, carve it into valleys and plains. On the east this "Shan plateau," as it is commonly called, is defined by the Salween, which cuts a deep gorge from north to south. The country to the east of the river is exceedingly rugged. In the whole trans-Salween area, comprising one-third of that of the Federated Shan States, there is scarcely a level spot. Range rises beyond range so precipitously that the valleys are but chasms. In the central part, stretching from the Salween to the Mekong, is Kengtung, the largest of the Shan States. To the north is the country of the head-hunting Was.

To a marked degree the Shan States are economically self-sufficing. Rice, the staple food, is produced in abundance, as are fowls, eggs, fruits, vegetables, meat, sugar cane and tea. Salt and dried fish are the only outside products needed. For

clothing, cotton is grown; the essential minerals gold, silver, lead, and iron are to be had for the working.

While not a highly cultured people, the Shans are neither uncivilized nor unlettered. Many centuries ago the art of writing was taken to them from Burma by Buddhist monks who gave them their religion as well. Shan literature, however, is limited, consisting primarily of state chronicles and Buddhist scriptures.

Agriculture and trade, the principal industries, are conducted on a small scale. On the whole life is simple. Although in the larger centers many houses are constructed of timber and have several rooms, the typical dwelling is a one-room hut of bamboo and thatch. Extremes of wealth and poverty are absent. In personal hygiene the Shans are clean. They are jovial, friendly, hospitable, and, withal, a charming people.

Although the Shans are the most numerous, they constitute less than one-half the population. There are some Chinese, Burmese, and Indians, but the majority of the non-Shans are minor tribes commonly referred to as the "backward races" or "hill peoples." They differ greatly from the Shans in appearance, language, and customs, and are quite inferior to them culturally. There are a score of these tribes, each with its own language, its distinctive mode of dress, and peculiar customs. Some are civilized but uncultured; others exceedingly backward. Some are warlike; others extremely docile. Many indulge in the most primitive animistic superstitions: the Kaw, for instance, destroys his offspring if they come in pairs, yet resorts to propitiatory ceremonies to secure them singly; the Wa has been driven to human sacrifice to propitiate the god of the harvest; the Red Karen orders his life according to the verdict of chicken bones. In unhappy contrast to the Shans, the "hill peoples" are frequently unspeakably dirty. So afraid of the "water spirit" are they that they build their villages high in the mountains, as far as possible from the streams. Dependent as they are on hoe-culture and hunting, their lives are exceedingly simple, their livelihood meager. Perhaps one-third of the population of the Shan States is made up of these diverse tribes.

In the last half of the nineteenth century the Shan States became a pawn in the game of Anglo-French imperialism. Having annexed Lower Burma in 1852, the British looked upon the remaining portion of the Burmese kingdom as within their sphere

of interest. Consequently, when French penetration from Indo-China threatened their hegemony, they occupied Mandalay and annexed to British India "the territories formerly governed by King Thibaw."¹

The scope of these claims was little known to the British when the proclamation was issued on New Year's Day, 1886. In the first place, the English were not aware of the extent of Thibaw's claims; neither did they know the strength of his pretensions. As for the Shan States, they knew he claimed extensive territory in that area, but they were aware also that his hold had been slipping, if indeed it had not disappeared entirely.

Following the enthronement of King Thibaw in 1878 the Shan chiefs had become restive. Financial exactions appear to have been the principal cause of discontent but decline of Burmese power was a factor as well. Not all of the onus for this state of affairs, however, attaches to Thibaw. For two decades his predecessor, Mindon, had been striving in vain to hold the important northern state of Hsenwi, first against a rebel, Sang Hai, later against Sang Hai's son-in-law, San Ton Hon. Thibaw proved no more successful in handling the situation than had Mindon; the result was that in 1885 a large area in Hsenwi was beyond Burmese control.² In the neighboring state of Hsipaw the condition of affairs was but slightly more satisfactory. The state was not in rebellion, but the sawbwa, Hkun Saing, rather than meet the demands of his suzerain, had fled into exile.³

Hkun Saing and San Ton Hon were sources of annoyance to King Thibaw, but in the south there was actually a threat to his hegemony. The large trans-Salween state of Kengtung had renounced its allegiance; at its capital a coterie of rebels were perfecting a plan for an attack on the Burmese king. The leader of the

¹Proclamation of annexation, Bluebook: Burmah (1886), p. 266.

²Report on the Administration of the Shan States for the year 1887-88 (henceforth cited as S. S. 1887-88), secs. 27-28; Superintendent, Northern Shan States (henceforth abbreviated N. S. S.), to Chief Commissioner, Burma (henceforth abbreviated C. C.), June 11, 1892, Proceedings of the Government of Burma in the Foreign Department (henceforth cited as Proceedings, For. Dept.), Oct., 1892, p. 134.

³C. C. to Govt. of India, Oct. 14, 1886, Proceedings, For. Dept., Oct., 1886, p. 2.

rebels was Sawbwa Hkun Kyi of Mong Nai. Summoned to Mandalay to face charges of insubordination, he had chosen to flee--but not until he had murdered the Burmese officer at his court. When a punitive expedition was sent to redress the outrage, Sawbwa Sao Waing of Lawksawk, the Myosa of Mong Nawng, and some lesser friends of Hkun Kyi joined him in flight.¹

The Burmese placed Lawksawk in charge of the Sawbwa of Yawnghwe and appointed new incumbents to the thrones of the other fugitives. They did not, however, undertake to penetrate the mountainous recesses of Kengtung where, consequently, the rebels found a safe retreat in which to plot revenge. Soon an ambitious scheme was evolved: to drive the Burmese garrisons from the Shan States and recover their thrones, then, with the co-operation of the other chiefs, to overthrow King Thibaw or at least establish the independence of the Shan States.² A nominal leader was secured in the person of the Limbin Prince, a cousin of Thibaw and pretender to his throne. In October, 1885, about a month before the British advanced on Mandalay, the Prince left Moulmein, where he had been living under British surveillance, to join the rebels at Kengtung. Before the Limbin allies had had time to launch their attack, however, King Thibaw had been overthrown by British arms and the paramount power at Mandalay was no longer an effete king but Her Majesty the Queen-Empress of Great Britain and India. Nevertheless, the Shan Confederates, under the Limbin Prince, went forward with their plan.³

Throughout 1886 the British were so engrossed with the pacification of Upper Burma that the Shan States received little attention; the result was that virtual anarchy reigned in the Shan hills. Wars broke out within states and between states; brigandage and slave-raiding became rife. In short, law and order almost completely collapsed. Of the many conflicts in this

¹Asst. Supt. Scott to Supt., Shan States (henceforth abbreviated S. S.), June 22, 1888, File 165, 1888, Taunggyi; Upper Burma and Shan States Gazetteer (henceforth cited as U. B. G.) Part II, Vol. II, pp. 25, 421, 422, 434.

²Kengtung Sawbwa to Hsipaw Sawbwa (henceforth cited only by name of state), March 26, 1886, Proceedings, Pol. Dept., October, 1886, p. 16; Report on the Administration of Burma for the year 1887-88 (henceforth cited as Admin. of Burma, 1887-88), para. 9.

³S. S. 1887, sec. 2.

welter of strife, the one of greatest significance was the campaign of the Limbin Confederacy.

The sudden withdrawal of the Burmese garrisons left the chiefs recently appointed to the states of the rebels in a precarious position. Tweek Nga Lu, the de facto Sawbwa of Mong Nai, hurriedly organized an anti-Limbin coalition. The de facto rulers of Mong Nawng and Lawksawk--the latter an appointee of the Sawbwa of Yawngghwe--joined as did also the chiefs of Mong Pan, Lai Hka, Mong Kung and Kehsi Mansam, while the Sawbwa of Yawngghwe at least gave them tacit support. Others, the most important of whom were the chiefs of Mong Pawn and Mawksmai, joined the Confederacy. In February, 1886, the Limbin forces crossed the Salween and the struggle for supremacy began. The fugitives recovered their thrones; Mong Pan was ravaged as was also Lai Hka and parts of Mong Kung and Kehsi Mansam. Within three months the anti-Limbin forces had been defeated, and practically all of the other southern chiefs had been brought into the Confederacy. Unwisely, however, the victors did not press for an immediate conclusion. Despite the fact that an ally recently established in Yawngghwe had been overthrown, when the rains which drench the Shan States from May to October set in, they ceased fighting. This six months' lull cost the Confederacy its cause.

The situation turned on developments in Yawngghwe. Sawbwa Sao Maung had been driven from his state and his half-brother Sao Chit Su, who was favorable to the Confederacy, had been installed on his throne. He in turn was dethroned by Sao On, another half-brother of Sao Maung. Sao On had acted presumably for the de jure chief, but, having won, declined either to turn over control of the state to Sao Maung or to join the Confederacy. Instead in May (1886) he appealed to the British for support.¹

Soon after the fall of Mandalay the British had undertaken to open negotiations with the chiefs. Preoccupation with the pacification of Upper Burma had prevented the sending of an expedition into the Shan hills but friendly letters had been dispatched requesting their co-operation "in the interest of good order, the welfare of the general population and the promotion of commercial intercourse." The letters stated that in due time

¹Admin. of Burma, 1887-88, para. 9; S. S. 1887, secs. 6-7; Sao On to the British, received in May, 1886, Proceedings, For. Dept., May, 1886, pp. 19-20.

an English officer would arrive among them "to settle any questions that may have arisen; . . . to promote the good management of affairs, and to preserve to the Shan States and people the peaceful enjoyment of the ancient and undoubted rights and privileges which may belong to them." The British Government, it continued, "did not desire to interfere with their autonomy so long as they kept peace, paid the usual moderate tribute, and abstained from fighting with each other."¹

When Sao On appealed to the British he was given a non-committal reply.² However, as the end of the year approached with the Confederacy still intact and not deigning even to open correspondence with the British, the latter resolved to act. Sao On had continued to beg for assistance. Therefore, when, in October, the Limbin forces invested the capital of Yawnghe, the British prepared to move to the relief of Sao On.

The expeditionary force was assembled at Hlaingdet, whence, on January 3, 1887, the march was begun. Colonel Edward Stedman commanded the troops, Arthur Heddings Hildebrand was political officer with James George Scott as his assistant. In a direct line the distance from Hlaingdet to Yawnghe is only about fifty miles but the terrain is so mountainous and in places the jungles were so dense that marching was arduous. The column was harassed by snipers but, except for a show of force at Nam Hkom on January 27, no organized resistance was encountered until Yawnghe was approached.³

Anxious to avoid open hostilities, the leaders of the expedition, on reaching Pwela--two marches from Yawnghe--paused to open negotiations with Sao Waing, Sawbwa of Lawksawk, who was commanding the investing forces. He declined to submit even when the British forces had arrived within three miles of his position. Consequently, in the early morning of February 9, his fortifications were stormed and his men put to flight. Yawnghe

¹Commissioner, Northern Division, Burma, to the Sawbwas, dated the --, 1886, Proceedings, Pol. Dept., Dec., 1886, App. A, p. 88.

²C. C. to Sao On, May 10, 1886, Proceedings, For. Dept., May, 1886, p. 20.

³S. S. 1887, secs. 9-10; Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India, Vol. V, Burma (henceforth cited as F. and O. Expeditions), p. 409.

had been relieved without the loss of a man.¹

Having accomplished their first assignment, the officers proceeded at once with the second--the selection of a site for a residency and fort. The place chosen was six miles south of Yawnghwe on the eastern edge of Inle Lake. On the suggestion of Hildebrand it was named for Colonel Stedman.²

It remained to secure the submission of the Limbin chiefs. Since it was hoped to achieve this end by persuasion rather than force, Hildebrand addressed letters to the chiefs,³ and, while awaiting their reaction, proceeded with the erection of buildings as tangible evidence of his intention to remain.

Within a few days all of the chiefs of the Myelat had submitted as had also those of Samka, Loilong, Mong Pai, Mong Kung, Lai Hka, and Kehsi Mansam.⁴ Letters arrived from a number of the Limbin chiefs and the Prince himself. There was reason to hope that all might submit; after seven weeks, however, it was discovered that instead they were plotting an attack, whereupon the British decided to take the offensive.⁵

To frighten off dacoits and protect their communications, the officers planned to advance to Lawksawk on the north to deal first with Sao Waing, then turn southeast to Hopong where the eastern chiefs had been invited to meet the political officer. Unconditional pardon was promised to all chiefs, including truculent Sao Waing of Lawksawk, if they would submit peacefully. The Lawksawk Sawbwa, however, chose to flee rather than submit. Therefore Hildebrand called a meeting of local personages and had them select one of their number as temporary administrator of the state. The chiefs failed to meet the officers at Hopong, but an invitation arrived from the Myosa of Mong Pawn for the expedition to visit his state, twenty miles farther east. Recognizing the hopelessness of resistance, shrewd Hkun Ti discreetly

¹Hildebrand to C. C., Feb. 10, 1887, File 22, 1887, Taunggyi; F. and O. Expeditions, pp. 410-11.

²S. S. 1887, sec. 12.

³Hildebrand to Mong Nai and other chiefs, Feb. 11, 1887, File 43, 1887, Taunggyi.

⁴S. S. 1887, sec. 14.

⁵Memo. by Hildebrand on the Political Situation, March 31, 1887, File 88, 1887, Taunggyi.

submitted. Furthermore, he used his influence to secure the submission of his allies. He who had been the "sword arm" of the Confederacy henceforth devoted himself loyally to his new suzerain.¹

From Mong Pawn the main body of the column returned to Fort Stedman, but, on the urgent recommendation of Hkun Ti, Scott was sent to Mong Nai to secure the submission of the Sawbwa of that state, and possibly that of the Limbin Prince.² The results exceeded the most sanguine hopes of the officer. Not only did Sawbwa Hkun Kyi submit, but also the Mawkmai chief, and the Limbin Prince as well. The Prince was promised a pension of two hundred fifty rupees per month and a house in Rangoon or Moulmein. On May 20 Scott arrived at Fort Stedman with the Limbin who shortly afterwards was sent to Burma, later to exile in India.³ In less than five months the Limbin Confederacy had been crushed.

Before this had actually occurred the Sawbwa of Hsipaw, the premier chief in the north, had submitted. On the fall of King Thibaw, Hkun Saing had hurried home to find his state torn by war. He soon recovered control and at the end of the year opened negotiations with the British.⁴ In January, 1887, he visited Mandalay where he skillfully negotiated his submission--so skillfully, in fact, that he secured title to three small neighboring states--Mong Long, Hsum Hsai, and Mong Tung, which he had been striving in vain to conquer. In addition, he obtained exemption from tribute for ten years. In part, this was the reward of his being the first chief to come to terms with the English.⁵

With the submission of the Sawbwa of Hsipaw and the collapse of the Confederacy the conquest of the Shan States was assured, but certain important chiefs in the north and east

¹S. S. 1887, secs. 41-78.

²Ibid., sec. 82.

³Ibid., secs. 82-145.

⁴Hsipaw to C. C., received in Oct., 1886, Proceedings, Pol. Dept., Oct., 1886, pp. 14-15; Secy. for Upper Burma to Hsipaw, Oct. 6, 1886, Proceedings, For. Dept., Oct., 1886, pp. 17-18.

⁵T. White, A Civil Servant in Burma (London, 1913), pp. 172-74.

remained to be dealt with. The Sawbwas of the trans-Salween states of Kengtung and Manglun were appealed to by letter only, but arrangements were made to force the submission of the chiefs of the northern states of Tawngpeng and Hsenwi as soon as the rains which drench the Shan States from May to October should cease. Leaving Fort Stedman in November, 1887, Hildebrand marched south to Mong Pai, then east through Hsantung and Mawkaui to Mong Pan, back to Mong Nai, and then north to Mong Yai in Hsenwi. At Fort Stedman, just before his departure, and at Mong Nai, in January, he held assemblies of the chiefs at which the relations of the latter with the British were discussed and tribute settlements reached.¹

Meantime a second column under Lieutenant H. Daly had penetrated the northern hills where it had visited Tawngpeng, and then advanced on Hsenwi. San Ton Hon, de facto chief of part of Hsenwi, threatened by joint action of the two expeditions, submitted without resistance. It remained to effect a settlement between him and rival claimants to the throne. Since the fall of Mandalay, Nawmong, the de jure heir-apparent of Hsenwi, had been fighting to recover the state from the usurper San Ton Hon but he had failed. In a conference at Mong Yai in March (1888), the state was divided between the two rivals, Hkun San Ton Hon being recognized as Sawbwa of North Hsenwi and Nawmong as Sawbwa of South Hsenwi.²

From Mong Yai, Hildebrand proceeded to Tawngpeng. The Sawbwa had fled on the occasion of Daly's visit, but, threatened by an overwhelming force, he now sent the heir-apparent to negotiate terms.³ From there the column marched to Hsipaw and on to Mandalay where it arrived April 9. With the inconsequential exceptions of Nam Hkam and West Manglun, all the states west of the Salween had been brought into subservience.

The trans-Salween states had not been entirely neglected; in view of the claims of China, however, they had been approached only by letter. Finally in 1890 the Sawbwa of Kengtung submitted

¹S. S. 1887, secs. 6-22.

²S. S. 1887-88, secs. 25-33; F. and O. Expeditions, pp. 416-17.

³S. S. 1887-88, sec. 38.

to a small force.¹ Two years later the chief of Manglun gladly acknowledged allegiance, apparently in hope of securing protection against his neighbors on the east and north.² This completed the conquest except for the Wa states. The truculent Was had kept both the Burmese and Chinese out of their mountain fastnesses. Nevertheless, the British claimed the area. It was reputed to be rich in gold. The British established their claim vis-a-vis the Chinese, but, after a number of unsuccessful efforts to subjugate the hard-fighting hillmen, allowed them to remain "unadministered."

Pacification presented a more difficult problem than conquest. The two expeditions of 1888 which effected the conquest of the cis-Salween states had not been completed before widespread unrest became evident, particularly in the south which had been left devoid of troops save for a small garrison at Fort Stedman. Sao On of Yawnghwe became involved with rebels and with the chiefs of Loilong, Nam Hkai, and Mong Pai; in Ye Ngan, a war for the regency broke out; Tweek Nga Lu crossed the Salween from the east and seized the state of Mong Pan; Sawlapaw, chief of Kantarawadi, drove the Sawbwa of Mawmai from his state and "annexed" it; in the north, rebels seized South Hsenwi. Such was the situation when Hildebrand arrived at Mandalay in April, 1888, having, since November, had "personal communication with every Chieftain in the Shan States west of the Salween and left them all [as he supposed] in the highest degree friendly."³

The British acted with haste and vigor. Daly was ordered to South Hsenwi to restore order; Scott to the southern states on a similar mission. The former invited the malcontents in South Hsenwi to meet him and present their grievances. Those who appeared were placed under arrest; the others fled. Order was thus restored.⁴

¹Report on the Administration of the Southern Shan States for the year 1889-90 (henceforth cited as S. S. S. 1889-90), secs. 8-14.

²Scott to C. C., report on Pacification of West Manglun, June 13, 1893, Lashio.

³Note by Hildebrand on report by Scott, March 25, 1888, File 8, 1888, Taunggyi.

⁴Report on the Administration of the Northern Shan States for the year 1887-88 (henceforth cited as N. S. S. 1887-88), secs. 29-30.

The problem in the south, however, was not as easily solved. On his way to Fort Stedman, while passing through Ye Ngan, Scott prevailed upon the opposing factions to agree to a truce. On arriving at Yawngghwe, he ordered Sao On to withdraw his troops and his enemies to cease fighting. When the former obeyed but not the latter, Scott dispatched British troops who routed the rebels. Leaving a garrison to maintain order, he hurried east to drive the Karennis from Mawkaï. While enroute, he learned that Tweek Nga Lu had occupied Mong Nai, whereupon he altered his course in that direction. In a spectacular surprise attack on May 10, he seized the rebel and a number of his aids. Proceeding then to Mawkaï, he found the invaders had withdrawn. Leaving a small garrison to protect Mawkaï, he returned to Mong Nai to establish a post.¹

These disturbances caused the British considerable apprehension for a few weeks but they proved to be only the dying thrust of a doomed order. Tweek Nga Lu and his chief aids were executed, Sao On was fined ten thousand rupees for lawless conduct, the chief of Nam Hkai was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for rebellion; others were similarly punished.²

Order had been restored, but the Karennis continued hostile. At the end of June, they invaded Mawkaï but were driven out by the Sawbwa's men. A second attack, two weeks later, was repelled only with the aid of British troops. Thereafter Sawlapaw, the Karenni chieftain, remained implacable. Efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement having failed, in December and January, 1888-89, an expedition occupied Sawlon, the capital of Kantarawadi. Still Sawlapaw stubbornly refused to treat with the British. Instead he abdicated in favor of the heir-apparent, Sawlawi, who recognized the suzerainty of the Queen-Empress, promised tribute of five thousand rupees annually, and undertook to pay an indemnity of three hundred thousand rupees for the cost of the expedition and the destruction wrought in Mawkaï by the invasions.³

In November, 1888, rebels had again driven the Sawbwa of South Hsenwi from his state which necessitated another visit by

¹S. S. 1887-88, secs. 42-44.

²Ibid., sec. 44.

³S. S. S. 1888-89, secs. 3-6; F. and O. Expeditions, pp. 419-22.

Daly.¹ With one notable exception, that was the last insurrection of any consequence. The exception occurred in North Hsenwi in 1892-93. The Kachins, warlike tribesmen who had supported San Ton Hon in his brigand days, resented it when, as Sawbwa, he failed to give them the lands and consideration they expected. Consequently, they concerted an attack, drove the Sawbwa from his capital, and undertook to set up an independent government. Simultaneously fugitives beyond the northern border made incursions. Many Shan villages were destroyed, and a number of Shans lost their lives, as did also a few British soldiers, before order was restored. As a result of the uprising the Kachins of North Hsenwi were placed under a British officer.² The Shan States have been the scene of occasional émeutes since 1893, but nothing that could be called an insurrection has occurred.

Delimitation of the frontiers precipitated issues with three countries: China, Siam, and France. The problem was complicated by the general absence of fixed frontiers, and by the fact that certain border states recognized allegiance to both China and Burma. The British claimed all territory that had paid tribute either to Burma or to its sub-states--but hesitated to enforce their claim for fear of giving offense to China. Commitment on the issue was in consequence delayed. Meantime the British undertook to glean as much information as possible regarding Burmese claims. "Feel your way," Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India, instructed Sir Charles Crosthwaite, Chief Commissioner of Burma, "and when you come against anything hard, draw back."³

The object, Dufferin declared, was to secure all territory that the Burmese Kings "had held or had been entitled to hold" and to leave no unoccupied space for others to enter.⁴ Working on this basis, the British insisted that the Siamese withdraw from a tract east of the Salween claimed by the Shan States of Mawkaui and Mong Pan. Furthermore, they established full title to Kengtung, as already indicated, but renounced claims to

¹N. S. S. 1888-89, secs. 11-15.

²Permanent File No. 16, Kachin Rebellion of 1892-93, Lashio; N. S. S. 1892-93, secs. 19-30.

³Sir Charles Crosthwaite, The Pacification of Burma (London, 1912), p. 21.

⁴Ibid., pp. 21-22.

Kenghung in favor of China and to Kengcheng in favor of Siam. When, however, France claimed Kengcheng by virtue of treaty imposed on Siam in 1893, the British revived their claims to the state. An agreement was signed by the home governments to delimit a buffer state, and a joint commission met in Kengcheng in January, 1895, for the purpose. The Commissioners quarrelled over a flag incident--the British Commissioner on arriving at the capital of Kengcheng, and finding the French flag flying but no Frenchmen around, lowered it--and were unable to agree on boundaries with the result that the whole matter was referred to Paris and London. The British rushed a garrison to Mong Hsing, the capital of Kengcheng; the French erected a fort at Kengkong on the southern border. The chief fled to the French. For a year the Union Jack flew at Mong Hsing. In January, 1896, however, an Anglo-French treaty was signed recognizing the Mekong river as the boundary between British and French possessions, whereupon the British withdrew.¹

Meantime the boundaries with Siam and China had also been defined. Early in 1890 an effort was made to demarcate the border with Siam; this proved abortive because of the failure of a Siamese commission to appear. Nevertheless, the British made an ex parte investigation² on the basis of which demarcation was carried out in 1893.³ The boundary with China was defined in 1894,⁴ but was revised in favor of the British three years later.⁵ Demarcation of it was not completed until 1936.

The British administrative organization in the Shan States is not the result of preconceived plans but rather a product of experience--the result of meeting exigencies as they arose. The original plan of bringing the chiefs into merely subordinate alliance and stationing political officers at one or two

¹Proceedings, Pol. Dept., Confidential supplements for 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, passim.

²S. S. S. 1889-90, secs. 5-7.

³Hildebrand to C. C., March 23, 1893, Proceedings, Pol. Dept., May, 1893, pp. 1-7; Hildebrand to C. C., Proceedings, Pol. Dept., June, 1893, pp. 1-10.

⁴Text of treaty, British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 87, pp. 1311-19.

⁵Text of treaty, ibid., Vol. 89, pp. 25-30.

strategic points to regulate their affairs and maintain peace,¹ proved impracticable. The risings of 1888 indicated need for a stronger policy. Consequently the number of officers for the Shan States was increased, and, by the Shan States Act published by the Government of India in November, 1888, considerable participation of British officials in Shan government was legalized.² Thereupon the relations of the chiefs to the British were defined and incorporated in sanads which were presented to the chiefs, with a few exceptions, in January, 1889.³ A sanad confirmed a chief as ruler of his state and provided that "subject to the provisions of any law for the time being in force," he was to be permitted to administer his territories "in all matters whether civil, criminal, or revenue," and that he might nominate, for the approval of the Chief Commissioner, his successor. These privileges, however, were to be subject to certain conditions: (a) that he pay regularly a stated amount of tribute, the amount being subject to revision, (b) that proprietary rights in all forests, mines, and minerals were reserved to Government, (c) that he administer the state according to the custom of the country, subject to the guidance of the Superintendent, (d) that he maintain order and protect traders, (e) that he keep a representative at the headquarters of the Superintendent, should the latter so desire, (f) that inter-state disputes be submitted to the Superintendent and his decisions accepted, (g) that a right-of-way for a railway be granted if desired, (h) that opium, liquor, or other goods subject to duty or excise in Burma be not taken into Burma except in accordance with law, (i) that fugitive criminals be surrendered, and (j) that jurisdiction be not exercised over European British subjects. Should these conditions be violated, Government reserved the right to rescind the powers of the offending chief.⁴ Minor chiefs received Orders of Appointment. These differed from the sanads in that they conferred

¹C. C. to Govt. of India, Dec. 9, 1885, and Dec. 13, 1886, Proceedings, For. Dept., Dec., 1886, pp. 30-41.

²Act No. 15 of 1888, Burma Gazette, Part III, Nov. 17, 1888, p. 115.

³Proceedings, Govt. of India, External, August, 1890, pp. 172-73.

⁴C. U. Aitchison, Treaties, Engagements, and Sanads, etc. (5th ed., Calcutta, 1931), Vol. XII, pp. 271-72.

much less power. In fact, they made the recipients simply agents of the Superintendent for the administration of their respective states.¹

With the relationship of the Shan chiefs to the British defined, the latter undertook to reform Shan government--not precipitately, but drastically. In 1889 British officers were empowered to withdraw cases from the courts of the chiefs, and to modify or cancel sentences imposed by them.² The following year, to prevent arbitrary and inhuman punishments, Shan customary law, modified to conform to British ideas of justice, was compiled into a simple code with suitable punishments indicated and provision made for fair hearings and the keeping of records.³ In the Myelat--the district between Yawnghwe and Burma in which there were a number of minor states--the Indian Penal Code was introduced. The chiefs were made second class magistrates and the Superintendent empowered to withdraw from them such cases as he saw fit.⁴ This arrangement did not work satisfactorily, the codes proving too complicated for the chiefs. After the passage of a reasonable time--forty years--the scheme was abandoned. In 1932 the Myelat chiefs were placed on the same basis for criminal justice as the other Shan states.⁵

Ordinary crime was readily reduced to reasonable proportions, but organized crime, especially cattle-stealing and dacoity, caused considerable trouble. The greatest difficulty was experienced along the Burma border where certain chiefs shared in the spoils. Government adopted the practice of holding the chiefs responsible for culprits traced to their states. When this practice failed to secure the desired results--as was the case in Hsum Hsai, Mong Long, and Tawngpeng--British officers with details of military police were dispatched to deal with the outlaws. Within a few years the gangs were broken up.

¹Ibid., p. 272.

²Foreign Dept. Notification No. 5, May 30, 1889, Burma Gazette, Part I, June 1, 1889, pp. 263-64.

³Foreign Dept. Notification No. 11, Nov. 19, 1890, File 286, 1890, Taunggyi.

⁴C. C. to Supt., S. S. S., Nov. 26, 1889, File 187, 1889, Taunggyi.

⁵Political Dept. Notification No. 57, Dec. 23, 1931, Shan States Manual (1933 ed.), p. vii.

Far-reaching reforms were introduced in the revenue administration of the states also. First, there was the matter of tribute assessments. The states had suffered so severely in the strife of 1886 and 1887 that many of them could pay little, if any, tribute until a measure of prosperity had been restored. It was expected, however, that they would soon recover, and so the policy was adopted of levying the same assessments previously demanded by the king of Burma, with the understanding that remissions, where necessary, would be made.¹ This practice proved too arbitrary to be satisfactory, wherefore Government undertook to revise the assessments on the basis of ability to pay. This was done in 1893, following a study of population and economic assets of each state. The assessments were fixed at roughly fifty per cent of the revenues of the respective states.²

To enable Government to keep a check on the finances of the states, budgets were introduced in 1892.³ Reform in the irregularity, opportunism, and injustices that marked Shan revenue methods naturally followed. Instead of the myriad of levies collected by the chiefs at will, an effort was made to consolidate all of the assessments into "a fixed tax levied at a fixed rate at a fixed period"--which meant a house tax.⁴ Exemption of "relatives of officials" from the payment of taxes on the basis of kinship was forbidden.⁵ The keeping of records was required, and public notice of individual assessments was insisted upon.⁶ These and other reforms were introduced to establish uniformity in revenue practices between the states and regularity within the states, with the ultimate object of equitable distribution of

¹Hildebrand to C. C., July 16, 1891, File 46a, 1891, Taunggyi.

²C. C. to Govt. of India, July 20, 1893, Proceedings, Pol. Dept., July, 1893, pp. 94-120.

³Hildebrand to C. C., May 31, 1892, File 132A, 1892, Taunggyi.

⁴Ibid.; C. C. to Hildebrand, June 22, 1892, File 132A, 1892, Taunggyi.

⁵S. S. S. 1894-95, sec. 22.

⁶Ibid.

the costs of government.¹

Revenue reforms were extended until even the domestic affairs of the chiefs became a concern of the British officers. The Sawbwa of Hsipaw, for example, was required to dismiss over two hundred ahmudans (policemen, betelbox and umbrella carriers, timekeepers, goldsmiths, a theatrical troupe, and other hangers-on), to abolish all sinecures, and to reduce greatly the number of his officials. Moreover, the amount of the Sawbwa's privy purse was fixed, and he was required to sell a number of his elephants to raise money for his debts.² These reforms indicate the length to which the British found themselves led in their efforts to introduce Western ideas of government into the Shan States. In the case of Hsipaw an "adviser" was stationed at the capital to carry out the reforms, or rather to see that the Sawbwa did so since all decrees issued from the chief; elsewhere, however, the British officers usually had more than one state to supervise and reforms were carried out more slowly.

A significant criterion of this increased participation of the British in Shan government is afforded by the increase of staff. Whereas in 1887 the British planned to station only two British political officers in the Shan States, eight years later there were nine. Following the disturbances of 1888 one officer was stationed in the Myelat and another at Mong Nai. The same year, the need of exercising closer oversight of the northern states resulted in the splitting of the states into two divisions--Northern and Southern Shan States--with a superintendent in charge of each. Inability manifested by the Sawbwa of North Hsenwi to control his Kachin subjects resulted in the appointment of an officer for that purpose; maladministration and insolvency led to the appointment of another as adviser to the Sawbwa of Hsipaw; fear of foreign intrigue resulted in the stationing of another at Kengtung. British administration steadily expanded until no phase of Shan government escaped its scrutiny.

At the end of the first decade of British occupation Shan government was still far short of British ideals; nevertheless, progress in that direction had been made. Peace had been

¹S. S. S. 1891-92, sec. 34; Hildebrand to C. C., May 31, 1892, File 132A, 1892, Taunggyi.

²E. U. Marrett to Supt., N. S. S., June 1, 1895, Main File, Genl. Dept., Lashio; N. S. S. 1894-95, secs. 13-24.

established, many of the legal and fiscal injustices in Shan government had been eliminated, and British administration had been organized along the lines on which it has been conducted since.

The keeping of troops in the Shan hills necessitated the building of roads suitable for carts. Two were constructed--one from Mandalay to Lashio, the headquarters of the Northern Shan States, a distance of 180 miles, the other from Hlaingdet to Taunggyi, whence the headquarters of the Southern Shan States had been transferred from Fort Stedman, about one hundred miles. The latter was extended shortly afterwards sixty miles to Mong Pon and continued another 150 miles to Kengtung as a mule trail. The British policy was to keep up military roads only, and to urge the chiefs to construct "feeder-roads."¹ Lashio and Taunggyi were connected with Burma by telegraph lines. The one in the south was extended to Mong Nai and Kengtung.

While the British did not annex the Shan States out of altruism, they did deem it their responsibility to improve the welfare of their subjects. Obviously it was to their own interest to stamp out contagious diseases such as smallpox and cholera, but self-interest alone does not account for the interest the British officers showed in the relief of human suffering. At first this work was undertaken by military doctors, but two civil surgeons were appointed in 1889. Vaccination for smallpox received special attention. In 1897 there were civil hospitals at Lashio and Taunggyi and dispensaries at Mong Nai and Hsa Mong Hkam. Doctors attached to military posts elsewhere rendered aid on request. In addition, hospitals were maintained by the American Baptist Mission at Hsipaw and Mong Nai.²

Little was done to promote education. The chiefs were urged to open schools, but declined to do so, and the British did not see fit to spend their revenues for that purpose. The result was that the only schools of Western type in the Shan States in 1897 were three conducted by the American Baptist Mission--at Mong Nai, Hsipaw, and Nam Hkam. Buddhist monastic schools existed

¹Govt. of Burma to Supt., N. S. S., May 18, 1898, Shan States Manual (1901 ed.), pp. 80-81.

²Annual Administration reports of the Northern and Southern Shan States, 1887-1897, passim.

but did little to solve the problem of illiteracy.¹ It was not until the present century that this problem was seriously attacked.

Considerable attention was given by the British to the promotion of agriculture with a degree of success. Efforts were directed along a number of lines: the introduction of new crops, the opening up of markets, the improvement of means of communications, the introduction of Occidental vegetables, fruits, etc. Breeding of cattle, mules, and ponies was experimented with. The first superintendents--Hildebrand and Daly--evinced a particularly keen interest in this matter. None of these ventures achieved the expectations of their sponsors. Nevertheless, potatoes and wheat became established crops, the feasibility of growing European fruits and vegetables was demonstrated, markets were opened by the development of communications, and the breeding of stock was improved. The last was achieved, however, more by the control of disease than by the introduction of new strains.²

The British expected to reap considerable benefit from trade both with the Shans and through their territory with China. Trade did increase--it more than doubled during the five years from 1892-93 to 1896-97,³ but the hope of opening up the China market through the "back door" never materialized.

British policy regarding natural resources provoked more opposition from the chiefs and caused the British more annoyance than any other aspect of their administration. Little was done during the first decade by way of exploiting minerals, but much valuable timber was extracted and so the issue turned on forest policy. One reason for the friction with the chiefs was the fact that the clause in the sanads asserting Government ownership of minerals and forests was an afterthought. Since a number of the chiefs had been finding their teak forests a lucrative source of revenue, they resented this claim of Government. Certain chiefs, particularly the Sawbwa of Mawlaikmai, caused considerable annoyance by obstructive tactics. Nevertheless, Government insisted on its claims and gradually, although with difficulty, worked out an

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Annual reports of the Govt. of Burma on Trans-frontier Trade of Burma.

effective forest policy. At first it adopted the policy of the Burmese kings of charging the chiefs a royalty of two hundred rupees per annum for each elephant used in the work. This amount was later reduced to one hundred, and might have proved practicable had not the chiefs, contrary to rules, cut trees indiscriminately. By 1897, to preserve the forests and exploit them scientifically, Government had decided to take them under direct administration and lease the working of them on a tonnage-royalty basis.¹

By 1897, not only had the British completed the conquest and pacification of the Shan States, marked out the frontiers, and established their administration, but they had laid the foundations of policy for the development and exploitation of their new territory. In the achievement of these ends, it may be observed: first, that the conquest was carried out judiciously and humanely resulting in the shedding of but little blood; second, that British policy was marked by a large element of opportunism; third, that the British administration was an evolutionary growth rather than a preconceived scheme; fourth, that the British tended toward increasing participation in the internal affairs of the states; fifth, that the British found it in the interest of simplicity and economy to administer the states through the chiefs; sixth, that the British undertook to establish uniformity in the administration of the states; seventh, that the tendency was toward the increasing accumulation of power in the hands of the British officers; eighth, that the British tried to promote the prosperity and welfare of the people by the opening of communications, the treatment of disease, and the promotion of agriculture, but did little to foster education; and ninth, that, despite the opposition of the chiefs, Government insisted on its ownership of minerals and forest products.

There has been no radical change in policy since 1897. The chiefs continue to administer their states but government has become so standardized that the chiefs are little more than functionaries. Centralization of power reached its apogee in 1922 when the Shan States were constituted a federation with control over public works, medical administration, forests, education, agriculture, and, to some extent, police allocated to the

¹S. S. S. 1897-98, sec. 49; Report on Forest Admin., Burma, 1897-98, sec. 19.

federal government. The chiefs complained so bitterly at this limitation of their prerogatives that in 1935 the British returned part of these functions.

The greatest benefits accruing to the Shans as the result of their British connection are peace and justice. Next to these must be ranked medical aid. To be sure much remains to be done in this field, but epidemics have been reduced to minor proportions, and facilities for the treatment of disease have been increased. In 1934 there were twenty-two hospitals and dispensaries supported by the federal government, and twelve provided by private agencies. In addition there was a midwifery school, and one hospital training nurses. There were two leper colonies.¹

Education has continued extremely backward. In 1902 a school was opened at Taunggyi for sons of the chiefs. Government has undertaken to roster education but has not met with much success. In 1934 only 15,299 pupils were registered in recognized schools--barely one per cent of the population.² Others acquire a knowledge of reading and writing in Buddhist monastic schools. Yet the 1931 census gives the rate of literacy as only 12.1 per cent for persons five years of age and over.³ Most of this literacy, it should be noted, is amongst the Shans.

In their efforts to develop the industries of the Shan States the British have achieved but qualified success. The production of potatoes and wheat has increased, largely as a result of the opening up of markets. Large scale operations both in farming and stock breeding have been tried without success. Many new industries and crops have been experimented with--dairying, sericulture, production of rubber, camphor, coffee and such--but none has been an unqualified success. There have been some gains, however. It has been demonstrated that Occidental vegetables can be produced and certain ones--notably cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, and tomatoes--are coming to be used extensively by the natives. Improved varieties of seeds have been introduced and considerable progress has been made in the control of disease

¹Report on the Administration of the Federated Shan States for the Year 1933-34 (henceforth cited as F. S. S. 1933-34), pp. 15-19.

²Ibid., p. 20.

³Census of India, 1931, Vol. XI, Burma (Rangoon, 1933), p. 198.

among stock.

Fair progress has been made in the development of communications. One railway has been constructed from Mandalay to Lashio, and another from Thazi, about eighty miles south of Mandalay, to Shwenyaung, near Taunggyi. In 1934 there were 567 miles of metalled, and 2,101 miles of unmetalled roads.¹ Inadequate as these roads are, they permit motor traffic from the northern to the southern extremity and from Burma to Kengtung. In addition they link up all except two or three of the state capitals with each other and with headquarters.

Trade has continued to thrive. The trade of the southern states which had increased from two and a quarter million rupees in 1892-93 to nine million in 1897-98, had multiplied to twenty-nine million rupees by 1923-24.² In the northern states the increase was much greater but an indeterminate portion of it was associated with mining operations which have developed in the present century.

The profits to the British have been derived primarily from trade and the exploitation of mines and forests. In both mining and lumbering the work is carried on by private companies under lease. The royalty from the forests goes to the government of the Shan States. In 1933-34 the forests netted a profit of over half a million rupees.³ The royalty from the mines goes to the government of Burma. The timber is extracted by a number of companies and the profits they derive are not apparent. The mining operations, however, are all but monopolized by the Burma Corporation. For 1933-34 this company reported profits of Rs. 6,970,000.⁴ It is the advantage of having these forest and mineral resources under their flag, and the profits accruing to the British companies which exploit them that constitute the principal economic benefits derived by the British from the Shan States.

Of the three parties most intimately involved--the general population, the chiefs, and the British--the chiefs appear

¹F. S. S. 1933-34, p. 14.

²Reports of Govt. of Burma on Trans-frontier Trade of Burma, 1892-93, 1897-98, 1923-24.

³F. S. S. 1933-34, p. 8.

⁴Ibid., p. 9.

to be the least satisfied with the present arrangement. Some of them have accused the British of breach of faith, and, it must be admitted, it is impossible to reconcile either the sanads granted in 1889 or British policy since with the promises made to the chiefs in 1886 and 1887. To be sure the promises of non-interference in internal affairs were conditioned on the maintenance of order and the keeping open of trade routes, but these conditions are scarcely sufficient to cover the regulation of justice, revenue, and general administration of the states, not to mention the household affairs of the chiefs. The British have met the accusation by pointing out that the first sanad offered was declaredly provisional. They remind the chiefs that they are indebted to the British for peace and that British support is the surest guarantee to the permanency of their positions. Finally, the British place the chiefs in personal dependence on themselves by maintaining that the sanads are granted to individuals--not to families in perpetuity. The fact is that the British are determined to administer the Shan States as nearly in keeping with their ideals of justice as possible, to promote trade, and to develop the natural resources. They prefer to carry on their rule through the chiefs toward whom they try to be charitable; at the same time they make it clearly understood that they will not tolerate persistent obstruction.

